

5. ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON IMMUNIZATION PRACTICES (ACIP)

The ACIP is a federal advisory committee that recommends routine immunization practices for children and adults in the US.

The major functions of the ACIP are to:

- Develop technical recommendations on vaccine use and immunization practices
- Harmonize immunization schedules with those of other advisory groups such as the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Academy of Family Physicians
- Approve vaccines for use in the VFC Program.

After approval, ACIP recommendations are published in *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* (MMWR), a scientific periodical prepared by the CDC (<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/>) and become the standard of practice for administering the applicable vaccines.

VFC Resolutions

Once a new or amended recommendation is published, the ACIP approves it for inclusion in the VFC Program by passing a VFC resolution. VFC resolutions determine what vaccines are available through the VFC Program, including the dosage and schedule. VFC resolutions are the rules that providers must follow when administering vaccines under the VFC Program.

The CDC publishes current VFC resolutions on their website at <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/programs/vfc/acip-vfc-resolutions.htm>.

A current list of vaccines provided by the Montana VFC Program can be found at www.immunization.mt.gov under the “VFC” link, document title “Available VFC Vaccines.”

Please note the following about VFC resolutions:

- VFC resolutions may not be identical to published ACIP recommendations.
- An ACIP recommendation does not apply to the VFC Program until the VFC resolution is approved.
- For new recommended vaccines, a VFC resolution must be approved before the CDC can negotiate a purchase contract with the manufacturer. Therefore, there may be a delay between when the resolution is approved and when the vaccine is available.

The Montana Immunization Program monitors ACIP recommendations and VFC resolutions and ensures that the Montana VFC Program reflects current guidance. As a VFC provider, you will be notified when new and amended ACIP recommendations and VFC resolutions become available.

ACIP Recommendations – Exceptions

Health care professionals can deviate from ACIP recommendations under the following circumstances:

- They deem in their medical judgment and in accordance with accepted medical practice that compliance with ACIP recommendations is medically inappropriate

The particular requirement contradicts State law pertaining to religious or medical exemptions.